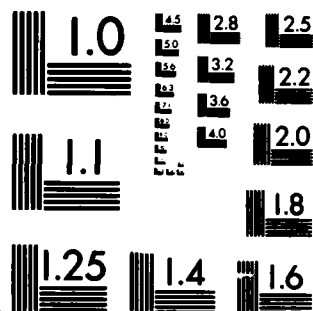


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ARGENTINA AND MEXICO

GUARDACOSTAS ESPANOLAS PARA
ARGENTINA Y MEJICO

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SPANISH COASTAL PATROL SHIPS FOR ARGENTINA AND MEXICO

[Ramirez Gabarrus, M.; Guardacostas españoles para Argentina y México; Tecnología Militar, No. 4, 1983; pp. 50, 53-54, Spanish]

In reality, it can be said that the penetration of the Spanish naval shipbuilding industry into the South American market is not a new development. Over a half century ago, in 1927, the Spanish government sold the Argentine Navy the first two destroyers of the British BROKE type built in Cartagena by the E. N. Bazán Shipyard. Those magnificent ships, initially designated CHURRUCA and ALCALA GALIANO, were renamed the CERVANTES and JUAN DE GARAY under Argentina's white-and-blue flag, and remained in active service until relatively recent times.

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In 1930 at the Cadiz Shipyard, the oceanographic research ship CAPITAN MIRANDA was built for the Uruguayan Navy; this vessel has recently been transformed into a three-masted sail training ship that continues to sail the open seas in spite of her advanced years.

During the Second Spanish Republic, around 1933, the Spanish ambassador to Mexico, Mr. Alvarez de Vayo, signed a contract with the Mexican War Minister, General Cárdenas, to build a series of 10 coastal patrol boats and five gunboat-transport ships based on the Spanish Navy DATO-Class ships. The patrol boats, designated G-20 through G-29, were built by Euskalduna Company of Bilbao between 1934-1936. They displaced 160 t, had a top speed of 26 kn with a 3000-hp diesel engine, and were armed with two 25-mm machine guns.

Of the gunboats, the GUANAJATO and QUERETARO were launched in 1934 at the E. N. Bazán Shipyard in El Ferrol, while at the Matagorda Shipyards in Cadiz the POTOSI was built and launched, also in 1934. They were identical ships of 1300 t, 79 m in length, armed with three 101-mm guns, and powered by two 5000-hp Parsons turbines that provided a speed of 20 kn.

The other pair of ships should have been the DURANGO and the ZACATECAS. We say "should have" because in actuality they never reached Mexico. The DURANGO was completed at the Valencia shipyard of Union Naval de Levante, and launched in June 1935. She was 1600 t, 86 m in length, had two 101-mm guns and four 25-mm guns, and had accommodations for 490 men and 80 horses. A 6500-hp power plant with twin shafts provided a speed of 20 kn. The ZACATECAS was impounded by Nationalist forces at the outbreak of the Civil War at a slip in the Echevarrieta and Larrinaga Shipyard in Cadiz in July 1936 and was transferred to the Spanish fleet for reinforcement purposes under the name CALVO SOTELO, thus never seeing Mexican service. Even today the aging DURANGO continues in active service as firm evidence of the strength of these older ships.

With these ships built for Mexico, the Spanish shipbuilding industry made a significant emergence into the foreign export market. It is a shame that the events that took place in 1936 cut short that particular export initiative, although previous ongoing negotiations had also been broken off with the Argentine government for the possible sale of an oil replenishment ship to their navy.

*Numbers in right margins indicate pagination in the original text.

After a period of years, the demand for sail training ships increased. In 1947 the Echevarrieta Shipyard in Cadiz began construction of a four-masted sister ship to the JUAN SEBASTIAN DE ELCANO (launched from the same /53 shipyards in 1927), which was christened the DON JUAN DE AUSTRIA after the Admiral of the Spanish fleet at the historic battle of Lepanto. The DON JUAN DE AUSTRIA was sold to the Chilean Navy in 1952 and continues in active service as the ESMERALDA.

The Celaya Shipyard in Bilbao has specialized in the design and construction of sail training ships, and since 1968 has built the following ships: GLORIA for the Colombian Navy, GUAYAS for the Ecuadorian Navy, SIMON BOLIVAR for the Venezuelan Navy, and GUAUHEMOC for the Mexican Navy. This group represents a record number of ships.

The E. N. Bazán Shipyard, which has monopolized Spanish naval shipbuilding from the standpoint of technology, has expanded into the commercial sector in recent years and is promoting its products with good results in the Latin American market. The promotional tour of the new corvettes DESCUBIERTA and DIANA during the early months of 1980 was, without a doubt, an important springboard for Bazán's penetration of the South American continent.

The B-119 HALCON Project

In 1980, E. N. Bazán developed the project of a deep-water coastguard cutter, designated the B-119 HALCON, which was naturally offered to the foreign market. The first order came from Argentina to incorporate five ships into their Naval Prefecture [Coast Guard]. This development should be considered a great success for the Spanish shipbuilding industry if we take into account that [West] German shipyards are currently building a series of MEKO-360-Class frigates; a TR-1400 and a TR-1700 series of submarines, and another series of 20 80-t/24-kn patrol boats for the Naval Prefecture. The bid for the cutters was awarded to Bazán and they are being built at their shipyard in El Ferrol. The names of the ships are as follows:

| | |
|-------|------------------|
| GC-24 | MANTILLA |
| GC-25 | AZOPARDO |
| GC-26 | THOMPSON |
| GC-27 | PREFECTO PIQUE |
| GC-28 | PREFECTO DERBES. |

The first two have already been delivered, and the remainder will be delivered by the end of this year.

Also at the end of 1980, a contract was signed with the Mexican government for \$100 million to build a series of six B-119 HALCON coastal patrol vessels intended for the Mexican Secretariat of the Navy. Construction was assigned to the San Fernando Shipyard in Cadiz, and all ships are already afloat, with the first four delivered to Mexico. Their names are:

| | |
|-------|---|
| GH-01 | CADETE VIRGILIO URIBE |
| GH-02 | TENIENTE JOSE AZUETA |
| GH-03 | CAPITAN DE FRAGATA PEDRO SAINZ DE BARANDA |

| | |
|-------|--|
| GH-04 | COMODORO CARLOS CASTILLO BRETON |
| GH-05 | VICEALMIRANTE OTHON P. BLANCO |
| GH-06 | CONTRALMIRANTE ANGEL ORTIZ MONASTERIO. |

We note in passing that even though the Spanish Navy has not made any decision in this area, it is interested in between six and nine of these ships.

Main Characteristics

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The B-119 project represents a ship designed especially to perform the complete range of patrol and maritime support missions, and to that end she is especially equipped for long-range patrols under adverse sea conditions. Her stability is satisfactory in all loading configurations for the purposes of safety and comfort.

The project was drawn up and developed entirely by Bazán, taking into consideration the specific missions assigned within the scope of the respective navies of Argentina and Mexico: revenue patrol, the monitoring of fishing or prospecting zones, surveillance of merchant ship and warship movements in territorial waters or areas of interest, as well as lifesaving in the event of a shipwreck or accidents at sea. She also has the capability to tow fishing boats and ships of similar size and the capability to lower launches to transport boarding parties for ship inspections or for salvage operations in bad weather.

They are also equipped to lend assistance to damaged ships, with respect to energy supply, assistance with bailing, assistance in combating fires, evacuation and medical assistance to the sick and injured, disaster search and rescue, etc.

As well as a sophisticated system to combat ocean pollution effectively, they can provide fuel and water to other ships in need and are equipped with a meteorological station.

The ship's radio communications permit the secure establishment of a communications link with fishing boats, shore, other naval vessels and helicopters, as well as regulation emergency communications.

In order to best fulfill these missions, the HALCON patrol boats carry a light helicopter stationed in a permanent hangar between the twin funnels and sufficient space to carry stores and assigned cargo. With respect to the type of helicopter, we can say that at first the Argentines were favoring the ALOUETTE III, but recently seem to have decided to postpone their selection, although not discarding the option altogether. On the other hand, the Mexicans decided on the German BO-105 helicopter from the beginning.

With respect to armament, all ships have a single 40L/70 Bazán-Breda-Bofors SP-48 gun, fully automatic and capable of firing 300 rounds per minute with a 144-round magazine. The gun is multipurpose: antiaircraft, antiship, and antimissile.

Each ship carries a crew of 10 officers, 9 petty officers, and 14 seamen, providing excellent and spacious quarters, given the sea conditions--not always good--in which the crew's work will take place. As a whole, the HALCON is a ship that can provide great versatility in a wide variety of functions, while not being an expensive ship to purchase or maintain.

The ship's characteristics are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Displacement..... | 900 t |
| Length..... | 65 m |
| Beam..... | 10.5 m |
| Depth of hold..... | 5.5 m |
| Engine power..... | 7,500 hp |
| Engines..... | (2) Bazán-MTU, 3,750 hp each |
| Electric generators..... | (2) 315 kVA |
| | (1) 80 kVA at 390 V and 50 Hz |
| Trial speed..... | 20.5 kn |
| Maximum speed..... | 21.5 kn |
| Range..... | 5,000 nmi |
| Complement..... | 33 |

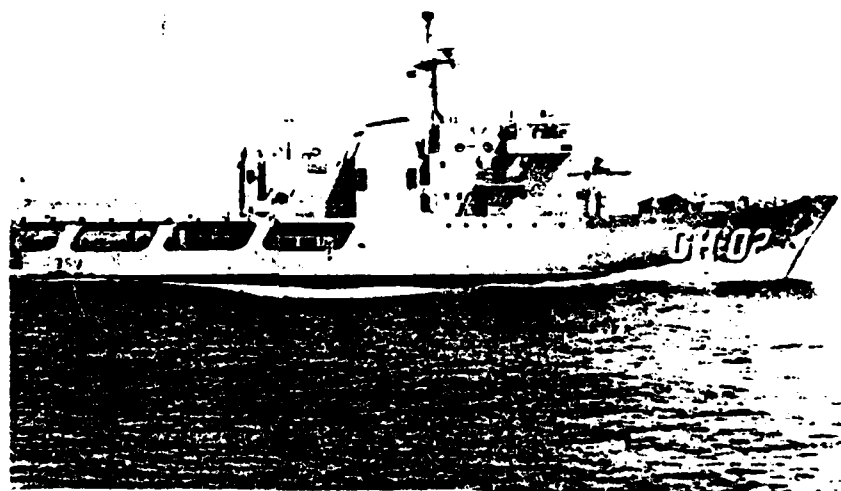
All ship launchings, including the Argentine ships built in El Ferrol and the Mexican ships built in San Fernando, have been accompanied by spectacular ceremonies, and all ships have been sponsored by distinguished ladies, wives of senior officers from the Naval Prefecture and the Secretariat of the Navy, respectively.

It is encouraging to see how those seeds sown by Spanish industry a half century ago in the naval forces of Argentina and Mexico have borne fruit today, not discarding the possibility that in the near future new contracts will be signed with these two countries and other Latin American countries. Of course, N. N. Bazán has based well-founded hopes on these negotiations. However, the negotiations can also rely in advance on the support and approval of the Spanish Navy, which also takes pride in seeing the renovation and modernization of its sister navies in Spanish America.

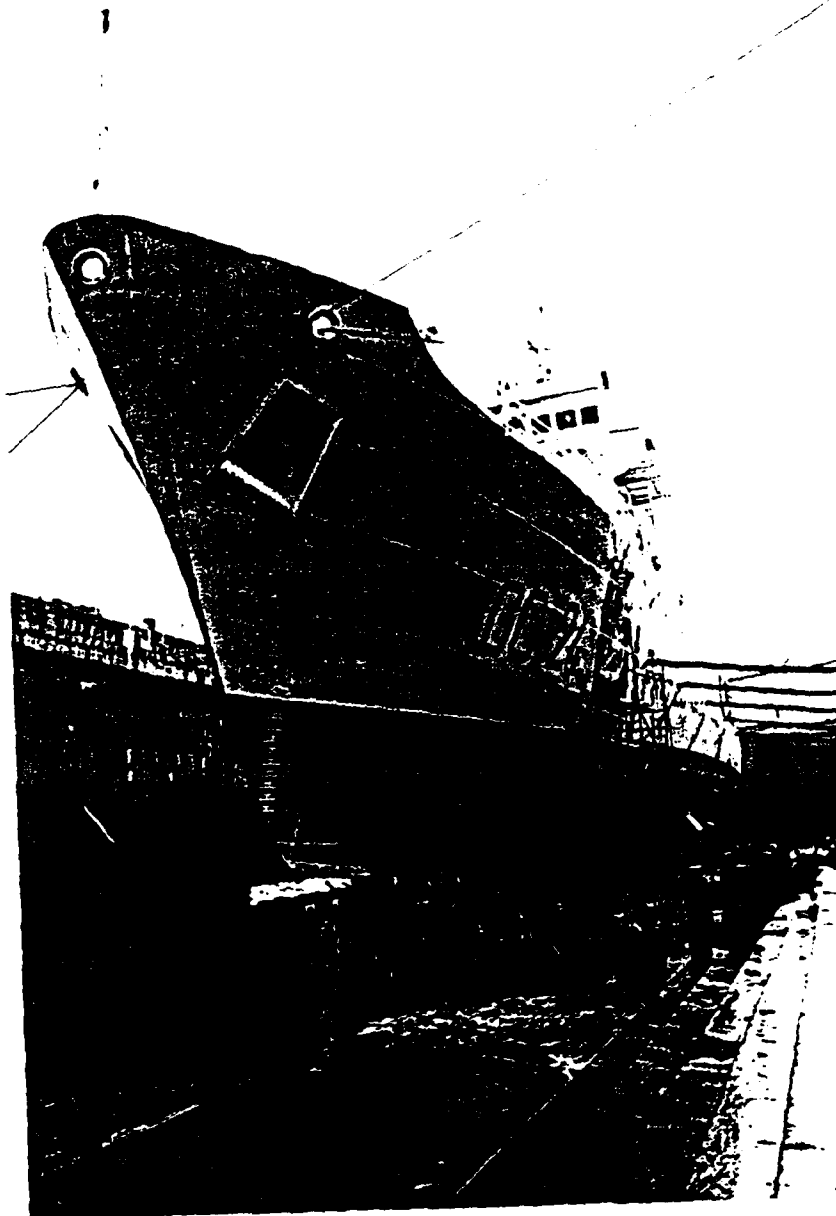
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A beautiful picture of the MANTILLA in the Ferrol inlet



View abeam starboard of the Mexican patrol vessel
TENIENTE JOSE AZUETA (GH-02) in the Bay of Cadiz



The Argentine patrol vessel MANTILLA (GC-24) in dry dock No. 1 in El Ferrol



The MANTILLA underway during sea trials. Note the helicopter deck behind the funnels.

